

# VIETNAM COURIER

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## 1968, A YEAR OF UNPRECEDENTED VICTORIES OF SOUTH VIET NAM'S REVOLUTIONARY FORCES

South Viet Nam PLAF Command's Dec. 20, 1968 communique (Excerpts)

### VICTORIES IN ALL FIELDS

**I**n the military field, according to still incomplete figures, the revolutionary forces:

- inflicted on the enemy 69,000 casualties including more than 230,000 U.S. and satellite troops. Besides, hundreds of thousands of puppet troops deserted or were disbanded;
- wiped out or heavily decimated one brigade, 7 regiments and multi-battalion units, 137 battalions, 18 armour squadrons and over 750 U.S. satellite and puppet companies;
- shot down, destroyed on the ground or damaged 6,000 aircraft of various kinds;
- destroyed or damaged 19,500 military vehicles including more than 7,000 tanks and armoured cars;
- sank or set afire 1,000 vessels, combat launches or cargo ships, 40 of which with a displacement capacity of 10,000 tons or more;
- wrecked over 1,100 artillery pieces;
- set ablaze more than 700 ammunition storages or fuel dumps;
- blew up over 700 bridges;
- and rained to the ground or forced the enemy out of 1,500 military sub-sectors and posts.

These achievements by

far surpass those in 1966 and 1967 put together. In particular, the number of U.S. troops wiped out in 1968 nearly equals that for the whole 1966-1967 period.

These figures spell out the great successes of the South Viet Nam liberation forces and people in a one-year period. They are all the more significant since they were recorded at a time when the enemy still had more than one million U.S. and puppet troops. What is remarkable is that all the crack units of the enemy have taken casualties of fifty per cent of their strength upward. All the cities and towns in South Viet Nam including Saigon, the last hide-out of the enemy, came under fire again and again.

Almost all of the enemy nerve organs from central to grass-roots levels suffered heavy losses. All the vital communication lines of the enemy were repeatedly attacked or cut off.

All the three kinds of our armed forces—the regular army, the regional and guerrilla forces—have grown up in the course of the fighting and building. Their successes have been on the increase in size and in number on all battlefields, in the highland areas, the plains as well as cities and towns. They have completely defeated the two-pronged "search-and-destroy" and "pacifi-

cation" plan of the enemy and foiled all their strategies and tactics as well as their large-scale operations.

On the political plane, the widespread uprisings of our people are a momentous and creative outcome of the fierce and dauntless progress of the South Viet Nam revolution. Tens of millions of our people have resolutely risen up to win back the right to be masters of the country.

The development supplies the most eloquent expression of the heroic stand and earnest aspiration of our entire people who had rather die than be enslaved and who prize independence and freedom more than anything else.

Our people's great uprisings are credited with the liberation and complete control of more than 1,000 additional hamlets. Over 2 million more people have been freed from the enemy's grip. Revolutionary power has been set up in many villages, districts and provinces, which politically has dealt a mortal blow at the U.S.-puppets, shattering their control by big chunks, and knocking off "legal and constitutional" varnish of the puppet reactionary Thieu-Ky administration which, in fact, represents

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\* Sub-heads and emphases are overrid.

## PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH'S MESSAGE

TO THE AMERICAN FRIENDS WHO OPPOSE THE U.S. IMPERIALISTS' WAR OF AGGRESSION IN VIET NAM

On the occasion of New Year 1969, I would like to extend to you my most cordial wishes for peace and happiness.

In the past year, the U.S. government had to stop unconditionally the bombing of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. That is a great victory common to the whole Vietnamese people, the progressive people in the United States and the peace and justice-loving forces in the world.

However, the U.S. ruling circles still indulge in acts of aggression against the peace and security of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. To South Viet Nam, they intensify the "war of aggression" by pouring over half a million young Americans to massacre the civilian population, committing monstrous crimes. But the more obviously the U.S. puppets, the South Viet Nam and maintain in power their puppet forces, the more they impair the interests of the United States, increase the number of young Americans sent to a useless death on the Viet Nam battlefield, and cause sufferings to many families in the world.

For the United States, the only an honourable solution is to withdraw all U.S. and satellite troops from Viet Nam and let the South Vietnamese people settle themselves their own affairs in accordance with the Political Programme of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation, without any foreign interference.

The Vietnamese people, having gone through over twenty years of unrelenting war, deeply cherish peace, a peace in genuine independence and freedom. But so long as their country is subjected to aggression, they are determined to fight on till total victory. With the invincible strength of their national unity, and the warm support of their brothers and friends in all continents our people are sure to attain their objective: to liberate the South, to defeat the North, to proceed to the peaceful reunification of the Fatherland, thereby contributing to the maintenance of peace in Asia and the world.

I warmly hail the courageous struggle of our American friends whatever the color of their skin, to demand that the U.S. government stop the aggressive war in Viet Nam; that it is a struggle which, while supporting our people's resistance fight, defend the peace and the lives of the American people and safeguard the life of their boys.

I wish you further successes in this just struggle.

Good health and good luck for the New Year.

HO CHI MINH

## NFL AND DRVN DELEGATIONS' JOINT COMMUNIQUE on U.S. Puppets' Holding Up Paris Conference

**T**he delegation of the South Viet Nam National Front for Liberation led by Mr. Tran Bui Kiem and the delegation of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam led by Minister Xuan Thuy to the quadripartite Paris Conference on Viet Nam on December 24 held talks at the seat of the delegation of the NFL. The two delegations published on December 25 the following joint communique:

"1. After U.S. President L. Johnson was compelled on October 31, 1968 to declare the unconditional cessation of bombardments on the whole territory of the DRVN and, at the same time, proposed that the Paris conference on Viet Nam be held on November 6, 1968, the government of the DRVN and the Central Committee of the South Viet Nam N.F.L. respectively issued on November 2 and November 3, 1968, declarations reaffirming their position to resolutely

struggle for independence and freedom, and accepting to participate in the four-delegation Paris conference including the DRVN, the South Viet Nam NFL, the U.S. and the Saigon administration. On November 4, 1968, Mrs. Nguyen Thi Binh, the representative of the NFL came to Paris, ready to take part in the conference. But the Saigon administration, by means of tortuous arguments, refused to send its representatives to the conference on schedule. Confronted with this situation, the representatives of the DRVN and the NFL proposed to the representatives of the U.S. that the three delegations already present in Paris should start the conference and that the representatives of the Saigon administration would join in as soon as they arrived in Paris. The U.S., however, did not accept this proposal and therefore over one month has

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The Viet Nam People's Army, founded on Dec. 22, 1944, is now 24 years old. Photo: An infantry unit on the move.

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# ON THE LARGE SOUTHERN FRONT

## MILITARY OPERATIONS

### HEAVY U.S. - PUPPET LOSSES IN 3 DAYS

(Dec. 21-Dec. 23)

- A position completely destroyed near Tay Ninh: 1 battalion and 2 companies wiped out, more than 600 men put out of action.
- Another puppet battalion completely wiped out East of Saigon.
- Two road convoys ambushed; 36 vehicles including 7 tanks and armoured troop carriers destroyed, 160 GI's killed or wounded and 8 aircraft brought down after 25 minutes' fighting near Tay Ninh; 22 lorries and 5 helicopters wrecked and some 100 GI's put out of action by PLAF artillery near the 17th parallel.
- Da Nang, Kontum and Cu Hanh (Pleiku) airfields heavily pounded in the same night (Dec. 22 to Dec. 23).

THE most remarkable event of the PLAF last week's military operations in South Viet Nam through news reports released by *Giai Phong* Press Agency was undoubtedly the great annihilation battle of Ben Cau on the night of Dec. 21 to Dec. 22 last. A mixed U.S.-puppet position established in this district town, 70km Northwest of Saigon, in Tay Ninh province, was razed and completely destroyed by the PLAF while defenders of nearby enemy positions were pinned down by artillery bombardments and guerrilla harassing actions. At Ben Cau, a U.S. battalion and a puppet Ranger companies were completely wiped out, suffering more than 600 casualties. The enemy also sustained other losses including three 105mm howitzers, six 160-mm heavy mortars, 4 military vehicles, the entire billet, tent or brick houses and casemates destroyed, a fuel dump burnt and many weapons seized.

On Dec. 17, at a point about 10km from Ben Cau, on Route 20 between Tay Ninh and Dux Tieng, a deadly ambush laid by the patriots cost the Americans 36 vehicles destroyed (among them 1 tank and 6 armoured troops carriers) and 160 GI's killed or wounded. In addition, 7 helicopters and 1 jet plane were downed in this 25 minute battle.

On the night of Dec. 20, at 10km East of Long Thanh, a district town located 30km east of Saigon, another PLAF lightning attack wrote off the master roll a puppet battalion comprising 3 companies and their commanding officers. Meanwhile, in Saigon itself, on the occasion of the anniversary of the NFL, many NFL flags appeared in the streets, especially in the 5th and 6th districts.

On December 22, in broad daylight, a puppet company was wiped out at about 10km East of Saigon and 5km NW of Long Thanh. Farther North in the Western Highlands, other enemy units were badly mauled. On Dec. 21, an enemy company stationed at Keng N' 20-9 (13km

Southeast of Dakto and 100km South of Da Nang came under a PLAF artillery-infantry attack and had to abandon the post. On the nights of Dec. 22 and Dec. 23, heavy artillery bombardments were mounted against the airfield of Kontum (100km South of Da Nang) where 4 U.S. copters were destroyed, and that of Cu Hanh, near Pleiku, 10km South of the former, where 3 C-47 transport planes met with the same fate.

IN the Da Nang sector, Western news agencies reported a violent attack by the patriots against a mixed U.S. puppet position, 30km West of the City, on Dec. 22. The same source said that U.S. marines and puppet rangers rushed into the rescue of the battered troops were intercepted. Enemy losses were given as heavy. On the night of Dec. 22, the big U.S. Da Nang Airbase was again pounded and the HQ of the 1st Marine Air wing was hit by PLAF shells.

*Giai Phong* Press Agency has just released the balance sheet of the wave of offensives that took place in this sector on the night of Dec. 15 (see our last issue) and resulted in 430 US-puppet casualties.

IN the Northernmost sector of South Viet Nam, near the DMZ and on Highway No. 9, an extraordinary feat was achieved on Dec. 23 by Liberation guerrillas who caught a whole US lorry convoy by surprise as it was delivering goods at a warehouse between Tan Lam and Su Ma, close to a helicopter parking ground. A deluge of fire rained on the enemy who, within minutes, lost more than 100 GI's killed or wounded and 23 lorries, 5 choppers, 2 fuel depots and some 20 tent and brick houses destroyed or burnt. A fire raged over the whole sector for hours. On the way back linking Cu Viet port to Dong Ha and the enemy outposts in this sector, on Dec. 16, 17,

20 and 21, 11 landingcraft of the LCU type with their cargoes and 1 patrol boat were sunk by the patriots.



PLAF men pursuing the enemy on a river in the High-Plateaux

## Saigon and Can Tho: Big Demonstrations against Puppet Clique

REPORTS from Saigon said that on the night of Dec. 24 a large number of placard-carrying university and college students staged a street demonstration for restoration of peace, serious talks with the NFL, dismissal of the Thien-Ky-Huong regime; and formation of a peace government.

Starting from the Saigon Students' Headquarters, the demonstrators marched through many streets and were stopped by police barely 100 metres from the residence of

puppet chief Nguyen Van Thieu. Fierce clashes took place between the demonstration students and suppressive cruel police who made about 100 arrests.

Panic-stricken, the Saigon mayoralty next day hurriedly made public a communique putting much emphasis on the fascist law 10-68 promulgated by the Thien Ky Huong administration in early Nov. This year, which threatens to bring demonstrators before a military tribunal in compliance with emergency proce-

the emergence of revolutionary power. The provincial revolutionary people's committee formally took office and read its declaration, strongly condemning the abominable crimes perpetrated by the U.S. imperialist aggressors and the puppet administration.

"The entire people and armed forces of Quang Nam province", the declaration said, "express full confidence in, and all-out support for, the NFL and undertake to address themselves to the historic task of liberating South Viet Nam, defending the North and achieving the ultimate reunification of the country".

durers, in a bid to intimidate the people of Saigon, Hoi and other South Vietnamese cities.

FOLLOWING the more than 10,000 strong Dec-4 demonstration, for 3 days in a row ending Dec-10 thousands of people from all walks of life in Tan Tho city held sit-ins during which they expressed demands for an end to the obdurate and bellicose

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